

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 217652
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: S/S-O TMARTIN

APPROVED BY: S/S-O TMARTIN

-----060831 121532Z /50

O 121455Z SEP 77 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 217652

NODIS

FOR DR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOL TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE FROM DAMASCUS DTD 12 SEP 1977

DTG O 121145Z SEP 77 QTE

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 5795

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY FROM MURPHY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, SY, US

SUBJECT: MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT CARTER FROM PRESIDENT ASSAD

REF: STATE 192565

1. I WAS SUMMONED TO FONMINISTRY SEPTEMBER 11, THE DAY
BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE FIVE-DAY RAMADAN HOLIDAY, TO
RECEIVE ASSAD'S ANSWER TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER OF
AUGUST 14 (REFTEL). THE MINISTRY TRANSLATION OF ASSAD'S
REPLY IS AS FOLLOWS:

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 217652

QUOTE

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

I RECEIVED YOUR LETTER WHICH AMBASSADOR MURPHY DELIVERED
ON 16 AUGUST 1977, AND I HIGHLY APPRECIATE YOUR PURSUANCE
OF EFFORTS TO ATTAIN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE IN
THE MIDDLE EAST REGION.

THE VISIT OF SECRETARY VANCE TO THE REGION AND HIS MEETING TWICE WITH US DURING THE VISIT WAS A USEFUL OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND PRESENT IDEAS. WE CONSIDER THAT THIS VISIT CONSTITUTED AN IMPORTANT STEP DURING WHICH WE STROVE TO GIVE OUR POINTS OF VIEW WITH RESPECT TO ALL THE ISSUES THAT WERE DISCUSSED.

TO START WITH, I WISH TO POINT OUT CLEARLY THAT THE ISRAELI VIEWPOINTS RELAYED TO US BY SECRETARY VANCE WERE IN WHOLE AND IN EVERY PART OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF THE EFFORTS AIMED AT REALIZING PEACE. WHILE ISRAEL IS TALKING ABOUT PEACE, SHE WANTS TO RETAIN AND CONTINUE WITH ALL THE ASPECTS AND FACTS OF AGGRESSION. WHILE ISRAEL SAYS THAT IT IS NOT PLACING PRECONDITIONS, WE SEE IT CLINGING TO EVERYTHING THAT IS BOUND TO WRECK THE PEACE DISCUSSIONS BY DEFORMING (ARABIC "TAMYIJ") THE ISSUE AND TO GAIN TIME IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT ITS PLANS TO PERPETUATE THE CURRENT SITUATION AND TAKE ACTIONS AIMED AT ANNEXATION AND EXPANSION.

FOLLOWING ARE THE SPECIFIC VIEWS WE SEE ADEQUATE AS A BASIS TOWARDS A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT FOR THE MIDDLE EAST ISSUE.

A. PROCEDURES:
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 217652

SINCE THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE IS THE CORE OF THE PROBLEM, WE REITERATE OUR VIEW IN RESPECT TO THE NECESSITY OF THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PALESTINIANS IN THE PEACE TALKS AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

IN VIEW OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE DECISIONS OF THE APRIL 7 SUMMIT CONFERENCE IN RABAT, THE PLO IS THE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. WE FORESEE ITS PARTICIPATION ACCORDING TO ONE OF THE TWO FOLLOWING FORMULAE:

EITHER (1) BY FORMING A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION, REPRESENTING SYRIA, EGYPT, JORDAN AND THE PLO
OR (2) BY FORMING INDIVIDUAL ARAB DELEGATIONS REPRESENTING SYRIA, EGYPT, JORDAN AND THE PLO.

B. WITH RESPECT TO THE ISSUE OF PEACE:
THE COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL THE TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967 AND THE RETURN TO THE LINES OF 4 JUNE 1967;
SECURING THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THEIR INDEPENDENT STATE. WE ENVISAGE THIS STATE AS COMPRISING THE WEST BANK AND THE GAZA STRIP WITH A CORRIDOR

BETWEEN THEM;

SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN ACCORDANCE
WITH THE UN RESOLUTIONS;

"ENDING THE STATE OF WAR" MEANS PEACE.

THE AGREEMENT MAY INCLUDE OTHER COMPLEMENTARY
MEASURES, DETAILS OF WHICH MAY BE AGREED UPON SUCH AS
DELINEATING NARROW BUFFER ZONES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE
BORDERS AND STATIONING INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS IN THESE
ZONES AS WELL AS OTHER MEASURES THAT DO NOT VIOLATE THE
PRINCIPLES STATED IN THE PREVIOUS PARAGRAPHS.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 217652

THESE ARE THE IDEAS WHICH WE ENVISAGE TO COMPRISE
THE PEACE AGREEMENT. THEY ARE OBJECTIVELY BASED ON THE
PRINCIPLES AND BASES OF THE UN CHARTER AND THE UN
RESOLUTIONS INCLUDING SC RES 338 AND 242.

WITH RESPECT TO THE PROBLEM OF SOUTH LEBANON, I
WISH TO AFFIRM THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM IN
THIS ISSUE IS ISRAEL'S CONSTANT INTERVENTION IN THIS
AREA. SUCH INTERVENTION REPRESENTS THE MAJOR OBSTACLE
BLOCKING EFFORTS EXERTED TO IMPLEMENT THE SHTAURA AGREE-
MENT AND CONSEQUENTLY TO ACHIEVE STABILITY AND SECURITY
THROUGHOUT LEBANON. NONETHELESS, THIS WILL NOT PREVENT
US FROM CONTINUING OUR CONCENTRATED EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT
THE SHTAURA AGREEMENT AND THE CEASE-FIRE AND TO REALIZE
STABILITY IN THAT PART OF LEBANON. MR. KHADDAM DURING HIS
COMING VISIT TO THE U.S. IN SEPTEMBER WOULD BE
READY TO CLARIFY THE ABOVE POINTS DURING HIS MEETINGS WITH YOU
AND MR. VANCE.

I SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REAFFIRM OUR KEEN DESIRE
TO PURSUE THE PROCESS SO AS TO REALIZE A JUST PEACE IN THE
REGION. I REITERATE MY APPRECIATION FOR YOUR SINCERE
EFFORTS TOWARDS THIS END.
SINCERELY YOURS, HAFEZ AL-ASSAD
UNQUOTE

2. COMMENT:

ALTHOUGH THIS LETTER IS BASICALLY A REITERATION
OF ASSAD'S PREVIOUS VERBAL FORMULATIONS, IT IS NONETHELESS
ENCOURAGING THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN WILLING TO TAKE THIS
FIRST STEP IN THE EXERCISE OF DRAFTING A PEACE AGREEMENT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 217652

3. WE NOW HAVE ALL THAT I SUSPECT THAT WE ARE GOING TO GET PRIOR TO KHADDAM'S ARRIVAL IN WASHINGTON IN THE WAY OF SYRIAN DRAFT LANGUAGE FOR A "PEACE AGREEMENT." THE TEXT CONTAINS NO SURPRISES BUT WE HAD NO REASON TO EXPECT ANY. ITS ONLY LOOPHOLE IS IN THE STATEMENT THAT "THE AGREEMENT MAY INCLUDE OTHER COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES, THE DETAILS OF WHICH MAY BE AGREED UPON...AS WELL AS OTHER MEASURES THAT DO NOT VIOLATE THE PRINCIPLES STATED IN THE PREVIOUS PARAGRAPHS."

4. THE DELAY IN ASSAD'S ANSWERING CARTER'S AUGUST 14 MESSAGE IS LARGELY ATTRIBUTABLE, I BELIEVE, TO THE FACT THE PRESIDENT WAS ON VACATION IN THE LATTAKIA DISTRICT FOR THE LAST 10 DAYS OF AUGUST AND THE FIRST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER. IT IS PROBABLY SIGNIFICANT THAT ITS DELIVERY FOLLOWED THE LATEST ARAB FONMINISTERS CONFERENCE IN CAIRO.

5. NOTE ON TRANSLATION. IN THE ARABIC TEXT THE SENTENCE "MR. KHADDAM DURING HIS COMING VISIT...WITH YOU AND MR. VANCE." IS INCLUDED AS THE FINAL SENTENCE OF THE PARAGRAPH ON SOUTH LEBANON. I AGREE WITH THE FONMINISTER'S INTERPRETER THAT THIS SENTENCE LOGICALLY REFERS TO THE WHOLE PRECEDING MESSAGE AND NOT JUST TO SOUTH LEBANON.
MURPHY UNQTE
VANCE

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT, TEXT, PEACE, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PALESTINIANS, CAT-B, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE217652
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O TMARTIN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: N770005-0597
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770973/aaaackap.tel
Line Count: 200
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d0650548-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Reference: 77 STATE 192565
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1306334
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT CARTER FROM PRESIDENT ASSAD
TAGS: PFOR, PPDC, PBOR, PINS, SY, US, XF, (CARTER, JIMMY), (ASSAD, HAFIZ)
To: WHITE HOUSE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d0650548-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009